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INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE  
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UNCLAS KHARTOUM 001634

DEPT FOR A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, AF/E  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: BASHIR LASHES OUT AGAINST WEST IN GEDARIF RALLY

¶1. (SBU) In a November 6 rally in Gedarif State, President Bashir lashed out against the West and accused it of trying to "destroy" Sudan, according to Sudanese media reports. "Money and power are not in the hands of the U.S, Britain and France," the President was quoted as saying. Using an insult that in this part of the world signifies absolute contempt, he added: "They are all beneath my shoes." He continued that Sudan would not bow down to anyone, and "whoever wants to fight us can go ahead and lick his elbow" (a metaphor for an act of futility.) Bashir also accused Western countries of conspiring to hinder Sudan's development, and asserted that "everyday, we will respond with a new development project in water services, education, health and dams."

¶2. (SBU) Bashir railed against the ICC and dismissed its Chief Prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, as a stooge for western powers. "Do not worry about what Ocampo says. He is weak, and his decisions are made by his masters in the United States, Britain and France," said Bashir. "These are the people we target, and they target us too," he added.

¶3. (SBU) Influential Presidential Advisor Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie had a slightly different take on Sudan's relationship with the West in a recent interview with Tunisian newspaper Al Sabah. Nafie accused the Bush administration of trying to impose its will on Sudan, and stated that "we hope the new US administration will pursue the language of mutual respect [in dealing with Sudan] rather than hegemony," adding that "if Obama's administration pursues this track, we believe relations can improve." Like Bashir, Nafie also refuted what he said were allegations of a lack of development in Darfur, characterizing them as falsehoods perpetuated by the media.

¶4. (SBU) CDA Fernandez spoke on November 10 to Presidential Advisor Mustafa Othman Ismail about Bashir's comments. The smooth-talking Ismail discounted the remarks as "the President speaking to his base," and added, "look at what we are doing not what words may be used in one speech." He highlighted Sudan's current phase of cooperation with UNAMID, willingness to cooperate with the U.S., a quiet spell in CPA cooperation, and efforts to forge a peace process in Darfur through the widespread consultation of the Sudan People's Initiative (SPI) and possible talks in Doha with the Darfuri rebels.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: President Bashir often makes fiery speeches at mass rallies that do not reflect his more considered views, and those close to him admit privately that he often gets carried away in front of a crowd (Dr. Ismail is always ready with this explanation). In this context, the Gedarif speech would seem less menacing than it might appear, but post will continue to monitor public forums for similar comments made by senior government officials, especially as the likely ICC indictment approaches. The

regime has been surprisingly understated lately in its rhetoric. At least for now, it is generally taking a conciliatory and pro-active approach in trying to portray an image of progress and forward motion towards peace in Darfur and CPA implementation, while at the same time leaving ample space for escalation, should a harder line be necessary after an ICC indictment.

FERNANDEZ